

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 6-8 and 14-16 are pending in the present application. Claims 6, 8, 14 and 16 are amended; and Claims 1-4, 9-12 and 17-18 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. Claims 6, 8, 14 and 16 are amended to correct minor informalities and to incorporate the subject matter from the claim(s) from which they respectively depend. Thus, no new matter is presented.

In the Office Action, the Claims 1, 9, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takahashi (U.S. Pat. 6,044,341); Claims 2-4, 10-12, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takahashi in view of Johns IV et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,657,950, herein Johns IV); and Claims 6-8 and 14-16 are objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Claims 6, 8, 14 and 16 are amended to correct minor informalities and to incorporate the subject matter from the claim(s) from which they respectively depend. Further, Claims 7 and 15 respectively depend from Claims 6 and 14. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that pending Claims 6-8 and 14-16 are in condition for formal allowance.

Consequently, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Application No. 10/528,473
Reply to Office Action of December 11,2008

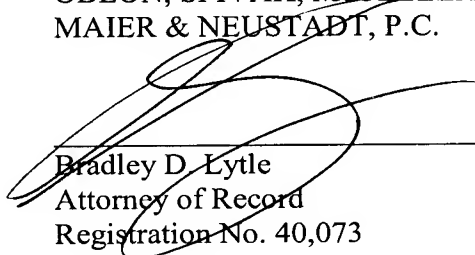
Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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